

Colchester Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: screening stage

Name of policy, service or strategy to be assessed:

- Councillor Development Policy

1. What is the main purpose of the policy, service or strategy?

- To support local councillors in carrying out their roles as democratically elected representatives of the community and community leaders;
- To provide appropriate training, learning and development opportunities to help councillors undertake these roles.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

To support the Council strategic priorities there will be a process for identifying learning and development needs at all levels:-

- Individual
- Political Groups
- Corporate/Strategic

To identify training and development needs at an individual level every Councillor will be offered the opportunity to formally identify their training needs on a regular basis.

Identification of learning and development needs at political group level will be through the political group representatives on the member development group.

Identification of learning and development needs at a corporate or strategic level will be thorough the Council's business planning processes, including the Leadership Team.

The Council will prepare a Plan to meet the development needs identified. This shall be a rolling programme which will bring together different levels of needs – individual, group and corporate. The Member Development Group will have responsibility for the preparation and review of the Development Plan.

Councillors must undertake relevant training and development before sitting on Committees and Panels exercising quasi-judicial functions, the details of which will be set out in the relevant Committee's Procedure Rules. The Council will keep under review whether any other development should be made mandatory.

3. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected?

- Colchester Borough Councillors
- Colchester Borough Homes Board Members on an occasional basis
- Councillors from other authorities who may be invited to attend occasional member development sessions
- Council officers

4. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy, service or strategy?

- To provide appropriate learning and development opportunities for all councillors, to enable them to acquire the knowledge and skills they require to be effective across all their roles and to provide a structured and planned approach to learning and development activities.
- The Council recognises that continuing investment and commitment to Councillor's learning and development is integral to achieving the Council's strategic objectives and the delivery of high quality services.
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- All Councillors will have equal access to and participation in learning and development opportunities, subject to their personal needs, taking into account those with work or family commitments.
- Councillors will have the opportunity to benefit from training and development opportunities, regardless of disability, race, national ethnic or social origin, gender, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

5. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

The Council will seek to use a wide range of methods to provide Councillors with the opportunities to meet identified learning and development needs, including:

- In-house training delivered by relevant council officers;
- Colleagues from neighbouring authorities;
- LGA Leadership Academy and mentoring programme;
- Specialist training companies.

6. How does the policy, service or strategy help to further or facilitate to our 'general duty'¹ to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not?³

(c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?⁴

Please complete the following in order to identify how the policy, practice or strategy furthers the aim of the 'general duty':

¹ These 3 points summarise the 'general duty' as it applies to public sector organisations in the Equality Act 2010

² The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

⁴ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

'Protected characteristic' group		How does it help to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'?	How does it help to 'advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?	How does it help to 'foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?
Age	Older people (60+)			
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)			
Disability	Physical	All protected characteristics will benefit from the Councillor Development Policy which will provide training, learning and development opportunities to help Councillors to undertake their roles as democratically elected representatives of their communities. This includes imparting an understanding of the Equality Act and Councillors legal duties under the public sector equality duty, and specifically the general duty as above.	All sessions are held in buildings which are DDA compliant and audio facilities and loop are used at all sessions. Officers and external trainers are provided with instructions to ensure they use appropriate technology. The Council makes available information from learning and development sessions to those who are unable to attend for example by circulating copies of presentations and handouts. This can help to advance equality of opportunity between people who share this protected characteristic and those who do not.	Equality and Diversity training is mandatory for all councillors. This will give councillors an understanding of the Act's protected characteristics, as listed in this table. This will help tackle prejudice and promote understanding which will help foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It will help ensure that equality and diversity issues are taken into account in decision making, which will also help foster good relations. This will have a positive impact when they are communicating with their constituents, as they will have a level of understanding and which will help them to deal with any queries or problems that their constituents have. This will also apply to their peers and colleagues who may belong to
	Sensory			
	Learning	Equality and Diversity training is mandatory for all Councillors. This will have a positive impact because it will give councillors a basic knowledge and understanding of all protected characteristics, as listed in this table.	The Council would endeavour to make appropriate allowances for individual learning needs. This can help to advance equality of opportunity between people who share this protected characteristic and those who do not.	
	Mental health issues	Councillors will be able to		
	Other – <i>please specify</i>			

'Protected characteristic' group		How does it help to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'?	How does it help to 'advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?	How does it help to 'foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?
Ethnicity ⁵	White	take equality and diversity decisions into account in decision making. This will have a positive impact when they are communicating with their constituents, as they will have a level of understanding and which will help them to deal with any queries or problems that their constituents have. This will also apply to their peers and colleagues who may belong to any of the protected characteristics. Member development sessions are provided raising awareness of issues relating to protected characteristics eg LGBTQ+, Impact of Sexual Violence, which increase understanding and help reduce discrimination.		any of the protected characteristics. Member development sessions are provided raising awareness of issues relating to protected characteristics eg LGBTQ+, Impact of Sexual Violence, which increase understanding and help foster good relations/
	Black			
	Chinese			
	Mixed Ethnic Origin			
	Gypsies/ Travellers			
	Other – <i>please state</i>			
Language	English not first language			
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		The Council makes available information from learning and development sessions to those who are unable to attend for example by circulating copies of presentations and handouts. This can help to advance equality of opportunity between people who share this protected characteristic and those who do not. The Council also provides a number of online training courses which can be completed remotely and at a time of the Councillor's choosing.	
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none) ⁶			
Sex	Men			
	Women			
	Transsexual / gender reassignment			

⁵ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

⁶ For example, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or no religious belief.

'Protected characteristic' group		How does it help to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'?	How does it help to 'advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?	How does it help to 'foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay and bisexual			
Marriage and Civil Partnership ⁷	People who are single, married or in a civil partnership		not applicable	

7. Are there any concerns that the policy, service or strategy could have a differential impact in terms of equality?

- Yes – see table and section 9.

Please use the table below to indicate how the policy, service or strategy could have a positive or negative effect on any of the following equality groups (known under the Equality Act as 'protected characteristics'). Include reference to any consultation, data or information that you have used in making this assessment about positive or negative effects.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	x	All protected characteristics will benefit from the Councillor Development Policy which will provide training, learning and development opportunities to help Councillors to undertake their roles as democratically elected representatives of their communities.		
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)				
Disability	Physical		Equality and Diversity is mandatory for councillors. This will have a positive	x	Councillors with disabilities may find it more difficult to attend learning and development opportunities. See section 9 below.
	Sensory			x	As above

⁷ Our legal duty in respect of 'marriage or civil partnership' extends only to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could disadvantage the group	
	Learning		<p>impact because it will give councillors a basic knowledge and understanding of all protected characteristics, as listed in this table.</p> <p>This will have a positive impact when they are communicating with their constituents, as they will have a level of understanding and which will help them to deal with any queries or problems that their constituents have. This will also apply to their peers and colleagues who may belong to any of the protected characteristics.</p>	x	Councillors with disabilities may find it more difficult to benefit from learning and development opportunities. See section 9 below.	
	Mental health issues					
	Other – <i>please specify</i>					
Ethnicity	White					
	Black					
	Chinese					
	Mixed Ethnic Origin					
	Gypsies/ Travellers					
	Other – <i>please state</i>					
Language	English not first language					
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks				x	Councillors in this group may find it more difficult to access learning and development events. See section 9 below.
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)					
Sex	Men					
	Women					
	Transsexual / gender reassignment					
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay and bisexual					
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are single, married or in a civil partnership					

8. Could the policy, service or strategy unlawfully discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly?

No

9. If you have identified any negative impacts above, have you been able to minimise or remove them, and if so, how?

- **Councillors with disabilities may find it more difficult to attend learning and development opportunities.** All sessions are held in buildings which are DDA compliant and audio facilities and loop are used at all sessions. The Council makes available information from learning and development sessions to those who are unable to attend for example by circulating copies of presentations and handouts. It also provides some training online which can be completed remotely.
- **Councillors with disabilities may find it more difficult to benefit from learning and development opportunities.** The Council would endeavour to make appropriate allowances for individual learning needs.
- **Councillors in this group may find it more difficult to access learning and development events.** The Council makes available information from learning and development sessions to those who are unable to attend for example by circulating copies of presentations and handouts. It also provides some training online which can be completed remotely.

⁸ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic' unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment – screening stage

10. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No likely negative impacts have been identified and this has been justified with reference to consultation, data or information. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Likely negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Likely negative impacts were identified but have not been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

11. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Richard Clifford, Lead Democratic Services Officer

12. Date of completion:

- August 2012
February 2020

13. Date for update or review of this screening:

- Summer 2020